



Things have changed a lot since 1988.



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MOOD: 😊 calm

MUSIC: Black Rebel Motorcycle Club - Weapon of Choice

Tomorrow is the 20th anniversary of the first World AIDS day.

Then, children born to infected mothers were under a death sentence, and the chances of them surviving long enough to need school were slim. About a third died before their second birthday. But by 1997, HIV had become a treatable illness, and there are kids today who are college-age who were born with HIV. The prophylaxis is really good now, though pretty uncomfortable, and if the mother is under treatment, there's a less than 2% chance the virus will be passed on.

This is a personal issue for me. About 40% of children with HIV are cared for by foster parents or nonparental relatives. I had seven foster brothers or sisters who were pos. That I knew about. There were probably more, but a lot of kids keep it private. Well, you know teenagers. Wouldn't you?

And some of them, their parents or foster parents don't tell them. Sometimes, they don't find out they have a chronic, terminal illness until they're twelve or fifteen.

So there are a lot of issues. Issues of teenaged sexuality and blood exposure. Issues of privacy and discrimination. Issues of planning for a life that could be a normal length--the new therapies are really good--or could be cut short. Issues of drug side effects.

Hard things to face, and learn to live with. Of course, in the real world, it's the same for all of us. We don't know how long we'll be well, or how long we have to live, and for a lot of us it won't be as long as we think we deserve. Or worse, as long as we need to see through our obligations. It's just more obvious for some people than for others.

It's an unfair and arbitrary world, and anything can happen. But HIV--while unfair and arbitrary-- is treatable and preventable.

Everything I've said only applies to the developed world, to countries that can provide health care and antiretroviral therapies. There are plenty of places on earth where that's not true, where things are just as bad as they were in 1988 and parents and health care providers just as helpless.

Here's one foundation that's trying to help.

([https://www.livejournal.com/away?
to=http%3A//www.pedaids.org/Home.aspx](https://www.livejournal.com/away?to=http%3A//www.pedaids.org/Home.aspx))

This looks like a
good idea.

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This.

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Little guy's not
bad.

Gotta teach RHex
to smear.

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